

FRANKLIN and Other Poems

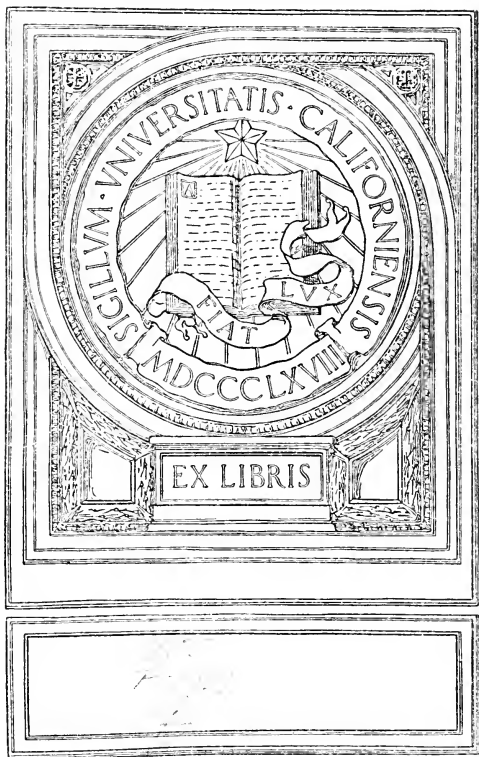
BY

J. J. THOMES POODOCK

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# FRANKLIN AND OTHER POEMS

BY

I. J. INNES POCOCK

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

## DEDICATION.

*These idle rhymes demand no sacred bays ;  
Forget to censure and forbear to praise.  
Nor praise nor censure please a Poet's ear :  
One may seem harsh, the other insincere.  
Then, if the giver you would best content,  
In silence take the gift, in silence sent.*





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*FRANKLIN.*

As precious seeds by wandering breezes sown  
In desert places unregarded fall,  
Yet in due season to perfection grown  
Make fairest show in Nature's festival,  
So noble deeds, though hid from present praise,  
Die not unfruitful on the rocks of Time,  
But blossom richly after many days,  
With golden buds adorning many a clime,  
And multiply in beauty and in worth,  
With fair example filling all the earth.

Nor deem we theirs unprofitable death

Who give their lives for their dear fatherland,  
Whether on battle plains they yield their breath,  
Or tossed by tempests on some lonely strand.

And if in years long past, when Elsinore

Frowned on the wrecks of Copenhagen's day,  
Or when the nations heard the battle roar

Of navies locked in famed Trafalgar's Bay,  
Franklin had fallen beside his chieftain slain,  
He had not died unhonoured nor in vain—

Yet had not shone conspicuous in the band

Of those best champions who with brows serene,  
Starred by fair gems of patient valour, stand

On ramparts won, and o'er the bridge between  
Across the gulfs of Death such lustre fling

That men may choose the master they should serve,  
And having chosen him their Lord and King,

From this best, noblest service may not swerve,  
But bear his banner evermore unfurled,  
Though seas shall rage and tempests shake the world.

For such was he, our country's pride and grief,  
Through youth and manhood steadfast and the same,  
Now calm and hopeful on the dangerous reef,  
Now in the front of battle hot for fame.  
All men were brothers 'neath his kindly sway ;  
Enough that Franklin ruled, they asked no more ;  
And so a Christian knight he held his way,  
And Honour's chaplet ever stainless wore :  
Wracked by rough winds and rimed with Arctic frost,  
No bud was blighted, not a leaf was lost.

And so to him 'twas given the path to find,  
And thread the labyrinth of that frozen clime.  
Coil after coil the serpent folds unwind,  
And drag the secret from reluctant Time,  
Until beyond the confines of the flood,  
Where blunted falls the daylight's golden spear,  
Upon the threshold of the night he stood,  
And looked beyond upon the causeway drear,  
Where sternly met ocean by ocean stands ;  
Cold friends they seem that clasp unwilling hands.

O fearful mysteries of ice and snow,

O solemn secrets of the regions dead,

Where Winter sits enthroned ; with pallid brow

He sees his drear dominions round him spread,  
The earth lies palsied 'neath his iron hand,

No dainty courtiers grace his awful state,  
The frozen winds before his footstool stand,

Breathless they seem his bidding to await,  
The frozen seas his royal mantle gem,  
And the red northern fires burn round his Diadem.

Who dares withdraw the curtains of his gloom,

Or in his spacious palaces intrude ?

Rash guests are they, and heedless of their doom,

Who break the slumber of his solitude.

Onward and ever onward they may roam,

But hands unseen the noiseless barriers close ;  
Farewell to all return, to love and home ;

Around, behind, the desolation grows ;  
In vain they turn to that unclouded sky,  
That smiling mocks them, while it bids them die.



Yet o'er this waste, through famine and distress,  
When first he led his faint and weary band,  
They perished not, but in their hopelessness  
Still hopeful clung to one Almighty hand.  
Oft told the tale, by many an English hearth,  
Of long endurance, hunger, toil, and woe,  
How one foul heart, hard as the frozen earth,  
With murder stained the yet uncrimsoned snow,  
Yet he returned on England's shores to tell  
To wondering ears the work performed so well.

But now why come they not to claim the meed  
And wear the wreath ? Lo ! where Britannia stands  
With arms outstretched to praise the glorious deed,  
She bears a crown of laurel in her hands,  
Her fondest looks, her kindest smiles prepares ;  
The Winter comes, they will return ere long ;  
His last bare wreath departing Autumn wears ;  
Why do they tarry ? asks each anxious tongue :  
Behold ! Orion in the East hath set  
His shining signals ! but they come not yet.

They come not yet : now melt the frosts away,  
And Spring prepares anew his hawthorn bowers ;  
Now vaunting Summer leads the lingering day  
Through all his treasured wealth of fruits and flowers.  
Our ports are thronged with many a foreign sail,  
From North and South they come, and East and West,  
Yet to our shores there wafts no friendly gale  
Those whom we long for most, and love the best ;  
And see, the swallows are together met,  
They hasten homeward—Franklin comes not yet.

Year treads on year, a generation dies,  
Youth grows to age, but they no more return ;  
E'en Hope is dumb, while with beseeching eyes  
Pale Sorrow sits beside her empty urn.  
Will none go forth to seek ? perchance to save ?  
Straightway new bands of heroes England sent ;  
Our brothers too beyond the Western wave  
Their willing hearts and hands to help us lent ;  
France gave her son, and dried her tears for pride,  
To see how England wept when Bellot died.

Strange tales they bring from seas unploughed before,  
Of dying men with hunger weak and toil,  
Like spectres wandering on the wintry shore,  
Of lonely graves upon the barren isle.  
But many a bitter prayer was heard in Heaven,  
Closed many a sleepless night on weary day,  
Ere unto truthful wedded love 'twas given  
To lead the Nation where her children lay—  
Ere those cold lips their stony silence broke,  
And, moved by woman's tears, grim Winter spoke.

Honour to her, that Lady true and brave,  
Who, strong alike in purpose as in love,  
Earth's joys and treasures unregretting gave  
Through doubt and death Affection's might to prove.  
What though her tears bedew no sunny sward,  
Where flowers may spring to thank Love's labour spent?  
Her work is crowned, she loseth not reward,  
While memory lives and conscience brings content,  
Nor heeds, secure of his renown, that she  
Hath share in all with just posterity.

Nor be their names forgot, the gallant crew,  
Whose little bark those Arctic perils dared ;  
All praise to them, the brave, adventurous few,  
Who by M'Clintock's side his honours shared.  
We read the seaman's tale so simply told,  
With him each creek and island we explore,  
Partake the toils, those stirring lines unfold,  
And while we weep for them we greet no more,  
With English hearts and English cheers we come  
To bid the gallant ' Fox ' a welcome home.

For now the veil is lifted, and we gaze  
Where dimly seen, as in some magic glass,  
While the clouds break, and melts the misty haze,  
Shade after shade the long-lost wanderers pass.  
From that sad landing in Cape Victory's bay,  
Where the rude cairn the scanty record gave,  
Awhile we watch them journeying day by day  
Along the margin of the icebound wave,  
And then—in vain our eager eyes we strain ;  
The mists close round, and all is dark again.

How high their hopes when, that first winter o'er,  
They hailed again the sun's returning smile !  
With hearts unshaken hoisted sail once more,  
And bid farewell to Beechey's friendly isle,  
And southward soon with prospering winds they steer,  
And Boothia's shores bay after bay are past,  
And now King William's northern point they near ;  
The prize long sought must crown their toil at last :  
Long ere yon sun shall set their course they'll shape  
Where flow the narrowing seas round Herschel's cape.

But now with sluggish pace the vessels glide,  
And scarce advance against the gathering flocs ;  
Still southward moves the slow but ceaseless tide,  
And southward ever crawl th' increasing foes.  
For winter's armies hosts on hosts are met,  
To bar the way ; on every side increase  
The ponderous masses, every path beset,  
Deny all progress, and forbid release,  
Till shield by shield encamp, and helm by helm,  
The frozen giants of the Arctic realm.

So two long winters held their ships beset

In that wild haven mid the waste of snows ;

Twice spring returned ; but unreceding yet

Against the eastern sky Cape Felix rose ;

And day by day their scanty store grew less,

And sickness came to thin their feeble crew,

And ever lonelier seemed the loneliness,

And the waste widened and the darkness grew ;

Then went they forth a hunger-stricken band

From the unpitying sea to the more cruel land.

Eleven long winters 'neath the crag concealed

The record lay those dying fingers penned ;

At length the page of sorrow stands revealed,

And vain conjecture ponders o'er the end.

Not mine the task, nor meet for idle verse

To shape the tale those dubious words suggest ;

Their labours past a few short lines rehearse,

No fears they speak, but leave to God the rest :

Nor ours to lift the veil ; by Him alone

Their deeds were chronicled, their sufferings known.

Ah ! could they speak, those fleshless forms that keep  
Their lonely watch, where, by the mouldering keel,  
The ready triggers guard the useless heap,  
Unprized by death what tales could they reveal ?  
Or ask of him; the bleached and ghastly form,  
That lies mute witness of the triumph won,  
Unscathed by tooth of wolf, or breath of storm,  
What woes were suffered, and what deeds were done,  
Ere came at last those pilgrims faint and sore  
To that Great River on the happier shore.

But he their chief ? When June's returning sun  
With melting icedrops streaked the idle mast,  
Long months ere yet that hopeless march begun  
His gentle spirit to its rest had past.  
Peace to the brave, the just, the wise, the good,  
Of all that mourned that day their leader's fate,  
And followed sadly o'er the frozen flood  
All mute ! not one the story to relate ;  
And yet enough : he reached the goal and died,  
His fame survives him and his deeds abide.

Peace to the brave! Ah! wherefore should we weep?

In honour perfect, not unripe in years,

He calmly rests, and sleeps a quiet sleep;

We will not dim his glory with our tears.

No proud cathedral holds its honoured dead,

But the tall icebergs lift their silvery spires;

No torches burn, but high above his head

The meteor lights flash their eternal fires:

What though nor organ peal, nor anthem swell?

There calm-eyed Silence sits, and guards his chamber well.

And so we give his body to the deep,

There to abide the coming of the day

When the fierce flame from pole to pole shall sweep,

And ice and frost for ever melt away.

We blindly grope, and seek with darkened eyes;

But long ago his vessel touched the shore,

High up the golden sands secure she lies,

Where never sea shall shake her bulwarks more,

Where Night and Winter can no shadow fling,

But suns unsetting roll, and flowers eternal spring.



*PLAY.*

## I.

SWEET hawthorn bring,

Fresh violets fling,

Scatter with snowdrops the pathway of Spring ;

The hoar frosts are melted, the swallows are come,

They twitter and chirp to the welcome of home,

And merry the chime of the schoolboy's glee

As he mocks the brown cuckoo that sits on the tree.

A carol they sing

To the glorious Spring,

Fanning the hills with his purple wing.

The school is all over, the books put away,

The boys and the girls are out and at play.

## II.

O kind warm June, art thou come so soon,  
With the fragrant morning and glowing noon,  
While the still white clouds in the azure sky  
Like ships on a distant ocean lie,  
Till tender night, like the shadow of day,  
Follows her sister the twilight gray?

O balmy June,

Fly not so soon,

We love the light of thy patient moon,  
That shines unwearied o'er lawn and grove  
While we dance to the music of youth and love

.

## III.

Autumn is here :

Yellow and sere

The dead leaves drop on the glistening mere ;  
The horses feed by the empty wain,  
That rocked 'neath the load of the gathered grain ;  
The fields are silent, the gleaners are gone,  
The tired earth rests, her work is done.

O tarry awhile,

With thy golden smile,

With sleep for sorrow, repose for toil ;  
A little while let her children play,  
For this is Nature's holyday.

## IV.

Heigh ho ! winter and snow !  
The white flakes falling silent and slow ;  
I draw my chair to the freezing pane,  
And watch the children that play in the lane :  
The shouts and laughter I fain would hear,  
But sounds fall dead on an old man's ear.

Heigh ho !

The night and the snow,  
The windows darken, the fire burns low,  
The night is coming to end the day,  
There's no more time for work or play.

*THE ROSES.*

TWIN roses in my garden grow,  
Twin roses red and white,  
I know not which shall fairest show,  
And most my love delight.

‘O sweet red rose, red rose,’ I cried ;  
‘Fair is thy crimson flush,  
As bright and radiant as my bride,  
Soft as her tender blush.’

‘O sweet white rose, white rose, in thee,  
No meaner charms I find ;  
Thou seemest true and pure as she,  
And stainless as her mind.’

The red rose, gathered from its place,  
Unto my love I bare ;  
She took it with an angel grace,  
And twined it in her hair.

Amidst her tresses, like a gem,  
It shone, and seemed to grow  
More beauteous there, than on the stem,  
Where first I marked it blow.

But when the evening shadows came,  
And lengthened down the glade,  
And all the sky seemed filled with flame,  
The rose began to fade.

And when the fires that reddened o'er  
The Western clouds were fled,  
The darkness came, that went no more,  
My love, my life was dead.

I plucked the white rose, pure and true,  
And laid it on her breast ;  
' O sweet white rose, thy constant hue  
Became her beauty best.'

The roses in my garden grow,  
The roses white and red,  
I heed them not, how fair they show,  
My love, my life is dead.

*A JEWEL.*

THEY say you are a jewel, and I own  
You well are likened to some precious stone,  
Polished, and bright, and pure, but hard and cold,  
And only fit for wear when set in gold.



*AN ENIGMA.*

FROM A LATIN EPIGRAM.

To me Parrhasius and Apelles yield,  
More true my colours though my art's concealed;  
My form, like Proteus, every shape displays :  
Like Paris, e'en on goddesses I gaze.  
Not Cato's self was Censor so severe,  
Speechless I am, yet all my judgments fear ;  
By many questioned, nought but truth I tell,  
And yet a falsehood oft would please as well.  
Look on yourself, if me you fain would know ;  
For showing others, I myself must show.

*ARIADNE.*

WHEREFORE, maiden, art thou lying  
On the lonely Naxian shore ;  
Stars are fading, night is flying,  
Ariadne ! sleep no more.

Now the moon her watch is ending,  
That did vigil o'er thee keep ;  
And the golden wheels ascending,  
Rim with light the Eastern deep.

On her bed, beside the billow,  
Dreamily the maiden turns,  
Where the sea-sand made her pillow,  
Heaped like gold from ocean's urns.

Slowly she her night-black tresses,  
From the pale earth lifting, still  
Waking woos the fond caresses  
That her shadowy slumbers fill.

Turns those eyes where love should meet her,  
Turns to him that bosom fair,  
But no lover's kisses greet her,  
And her arms embrace but air.

'Theseus ! wherefore hast thou left me ?'  
From her couch in haste she springs;  
'Theseus ! who hath thus bereft me !'  
Loud her lamentation rings.

And the wild waves answer 'Theseus !'  
Shoreward rolling from the main ;  
And the caverns answer 'Theseus !'  
To the roaring seas again.

‘Theseus ! let the echoes carry  
Forth thy name where thou hast strayed ;  
Theseus ! wherefore dost thou tarry ?  
Ah ! what woe were I betrayed.

‘Thou hast wandered forth to listen  
To the sighing of the waves,  
Where the dying moonbeams glisten  
O’er the crystal cornered caves.

‘Gathering all the pearly treasures  
Scattered from the Nereids’ hair,  
While they danced their nightly measures,  
For thy bride a chaplet fair.

‘Or, perchance, some creek of ocean,  
Whose clear depths the West wind warms,  
Murmuring with soft emotion,  
Clasps thee round with loving arms.

‘ Ah ! but I am idly dreaming,  
    Would that sight and sense might fail !  
O’er the dusky waters gleaming,  
    I behold thy flying sail.

‘ Thou wilt banquet crowned with glory,  
    In the halls that Cecrops trod,  
Where the bards that sing thy story,  
    Hail thee, Hero ! hail thee, God !

‘ Far beyond yon waste of waters  
    Thou wilt find a fairer bride ;  
Kinglike sons and queenlike daughters  
    Grow in beauty at thy side.

‘ But my night no morn shall brighten,  
    None shall stretch a hand to save,  
Where my tombless bones shall whiten,  
    By the lone Egean wave.

‘ From their cloud-begirt dominions,  
At the coming of the day,  
Downward borne on shining pinions  
Swoop the sea-birds on their prey.

‘ Maidens there shall none be keeping  
Watch beside me where I lie ;  
Mother there shall none be weeping  
In my chamber while I die.

‘ Now, perchance, she sits lamenting ;  
Mother love bestowed in vain ;  
Bitter waking ! vain repenting !  
Cruel Eros, loose thy chain !

‘ I will hasten ere the morning,  
Growing into perfect day,  
Light the monstrous brood returning  
Seaward from their nightly prey.

‘ I will hasten ere they rend me,  
Ere the greedy troop be met ;  
Though nor sky nor earth defend me,  
I shall find a refuge yet.

‘ Ocean, father Ocean ! hear me ;  
Clasp me to thy bosom cold.  
Ocean, father Ocean ! bear me  
In thy mantle’s purple fold.

‘ Take me to thy silent dwelling ;  
Hide me in thy secret cells ;  
Where the billows, downward welling,  
Sink upon their couch of shells.

‘ O to slumber there were better  
Than some pirate’s bride to be,  
Bound in worse than Slavery’s fetter,  
I, thy child, Pasiphae !

‘ I, great Minos ! I, thy daughter,  
Nurtured at thy kingly feet,  
Far beyond yon world of water,  
In thy hundred-citied Crete.

‘ Wherefore am I idly speaking ?  
What are land or sire to me ?  
Chains there are that know no breaking ;  
“ Theseus ! I was wed to thee.”

‘ Wed to thee, though seas divide us ;  
Thou my bridegroom, I thy bride,  
Evermore till black Cocytus  
Roll between his ghastly tide.

‘ Hades ! guide me to thy portal ;’  
But the billows hushed their roar,  
And there spake a voice immortal,  
‘ Ariadne ! weep no more.



‘ Weep no wrong that Earth may do thee,  
Thou shalt wed a mightier King ;  
Great Lyæus comes to woo thee ;  
Hark ! the silver clarions ring.

‘ Hark ! the clashing cymbal sounding  
With the hymn of triumph peals ;  
Nymphs and Fauns the God surrounding,  
Dance before his chariot wheels.

‘ High the leafy Thyrsus waving  
Flash their vine-empurpled hands ;  
Shouting, singing, wildly raving,  
Come the Bacchanalian bands.

‘ They who guard his glittering porches,  
They who haunt his shadowy glades,  
With flowing hair and flaming torches  
Come the Mimallonian Maids.

‘ Evoe ! Evoe ! shouting, never  
Does the echoing chorus fail ;  
Evoe ! Evoe ! hail for ever !  
Chosen bride of Bacchus, hail !

‘ ‘Mid the starry constellations  
Soon a goddess thou shalt rise ;  
While, from every shore, the nations  
Heavenward gaze with wondering eyes.

‘ Where the gleaming javelin bearing,  
Great Bootes guards thy throne ;  
And the lion-trophies wearing  
Shines Alcmena’s mighty son.

‘ Oft ere dawn the shepherd, dreaming  
On the dark Idæan height,  
Shall behold thy glory streaming  
Round the lingering steps of night.

‘Oft the seaman, homeward steering,  
Furl the sail and rest the oar,  
Till thy Cretan crown appearing  
Guide his vessel to the shore.’

*TO A FAMOUS SINGER.*

No more thy thronging votaries come,  
The fire is quenched, the altar cold,  
The garlands dead, the priestess dumb,  
Nay e'en the Goddess has grown old.

Lost is the glorious gift of song,  
That, like a river, deep and wide,  
With flood melodious swept along  
Our hearts on its resistless tide.

But we who worshipped, worship still ;  
The music lingers in our ears ;  
The magic tones our senses thrill,  
With echoes borne from distant years,

With jealous eyes we watch the throne,  
Still vacant in the gorgeous scene ;  
And deem the sceptre still thy own,  
Till Song shall crown as great a queen.

*THE DESERTED GARDEN.*

YE roses, wherefore do ye bloom so fair  
To wither on the icy heart of earth ;  
There comes no hand to pluck your blossoms rare,  
Nor eye to see, nor tongue to praise your worth ;  
In these dull paths, by no steps visited,  
The swift hours slumber, Time and Life seem dead.

But every flower more crimson seemed to flush,  
The heavy air a softer fragrance filled,  
And through the silent garden's burning hush,  
A whisper went, that all my being thrilled :  
'We breathe and bloom in our appointed spot,  
And wait Love's coming, though he heed us not.'

*WINTER.*

THE world grew fairer still, but he  
Was feebler day by day ;  
Old Winter looked, and sighed to see  
His kingdom pass away.

The rivers glided from his grasp ;  
The fields forsook his thrall ;  
The winds his palace gates unclasp,  
And loose his bondsmen all.

No vain lament he made to show  
The loss of friends and throne,  
And yield derision to his foe,  
But wandered forth alone.

And Summer came, with vauntful heart  
    He hastened, well content  
To see the grey old King depart,  
    And jeered him as he went.

He summoned all his comrades gay,  
    They came, a merry throng ;  
They feasted all the lengthening day,  
    With mirth, and dance, and song.

They plucked the fruits, they quaffed the wine  
    In chambers strewn with flowers,  
'Neath suns that never ceased to shine  
    Through all the cloudless hours.

And flushed with triumph Summer spake,  
    ' A glorious land I sway ;  
Here will I sit enthroned, and make  
    Eternal holiday.'



What means the darkness gathering round ?

Why did the forest sigh ?

The crisp leaves tremble to the ground,

The gardens droop and die ?

And rougher winds begin to blow,

The whitening waves rejoice,

For in the tempest's muttering low

They hear their master's voice.

Once weak and old he tottered out,

But now with lance and helm

He comes again, a champion stout,

To claim his ancient realm.

As night came down, new stars were met,

And, when the morning rose,

Along the crimson peaks were set

His sentinels—the snows.

The black north-wind his banner lifts  
    Behind the hills of pine ;  
Between the frosty mountain rifts  
    The spears of silver shine.

From rock to rock, from ridge to ridge,  
    The conquering armies come ;  
Before their tramp was on the bridge,  
    The stream beneath was dumb.

Earth hears her ancient lord's command,  
    Nor dares disown his reign ;  
For Winter stretches out his hand,  
    And makes us slaves again.

*MOONSHINE.*

A QUIET village hidden lies

Among the breezy Wiltshire downs,  
Where Nature looks with kindly eyes  
On simple maids and witless clowns.

Where dwelt their sires, they live at peace,  
Content with one unchanging scene,  
And little wiser than their geese  
That cackle on the village green.

Strange tales the country gossips tell,  
Of those rude sires that slumber all,  
Where the low churchyard hillocks swell,  
And the broad chestnut shadows fall.

How in old days, with trouble great,  
They saw those stately trees arise,  
While the loved tower ne'er changed his state,  
Nor mounted nearer to the skies.

How Hodge and Giles in counsel met,  
And after sage discourse and long,  
From the farmyard the straw would get,  
And spread it well with spade and prong.

The ancient walls they dug around,  
The deep foundations covered o'er,  
Then watched, and wondered when they found  
The tower no taller than before.

But Robin Flinthead oft had seen,  
Reflected in the village pond,  
The full round moon, whose silver sheen,  
Lit all the vale and hills beyond ;

And pondered ere he went to sleep,  
    ‘What priceless treasure this must be,  
That shines so bright, though sunk so deep,  
    Lost to my village mates and me.

    ‘’Tis pity that it thus should lie,  
    ’Twould gladden many a heavy soul,  
To fish it up ’twere best to try,  
    What joy to win that golden bowl.’

And so the foolish crew began,  
    Each clodpole with his rake in hand,  
To stir the pond: O lucky man,  
    Who brings the golden fish to land!

They raked and raked, but nought they found,  
    Till night gave way to reddening morn,  
While the still moonlight shone around,  
    And laughed their silly pains to scorn.

The glassy pool grew foul and thick,  
The grassy banks with mud were smeared,  
And when the moon went down, how quick  
The golden treasure disappeared !

But far and wide the story went,  
And still the neighbours one and all,  
Those swains of wisdom innocent,  
The moonrakers of Canning call.

An idle tale, that helps to-night  
To string my rhymes, my verse to fill;  
Yet we may mock, or read aright,  
And learn a moral, if we will.

We trouble oft Life's lucid streams,  
With longings vain ; our eager eyes  
Search all its depths for stars that gleam,  
Reflected only from the skies ;

To many a foolish purpose hold,  
And grope and stumble till we fall,  
And find that what we sought as gold,  
Was only Moonshine after all.

*SPRING.*

## I.

WE hear no more  
The winter hoar,  
His icy fetters clink,  
The royal Spring  
Comes like a king,  
With banners white and pink.  
The mill-wheel goes,  
The river flows,  
Bubbling over the brink.  
There are odours rare,  
And songs in the air,  
The cuckoo's come, I think, I think ;  
The cuckoo's come, I think.



## II.

DEAR Lucy's eyes,  
From yonder skies,  
A deeper violet drink :  
O ! Love lies deep,  
Yet seems to peep,  
Like sunshine through a chink.  
Ah ! cold as snow,  
But who can know  
What rosy chains may link  
Our hearts to-day,  
Then, blushing May,  
I'll ask again, I think, I think ;  
I'll ask again, I think.

*CEYX AND ALCYONE.*

'THE incense rises, at the shrine she kneels,  
Alcyone, the true and gentle queen ;  
Slow rolls the night on her celestial wheels,  
O'er silent shores and ocean gulphs between,  
Till the sad Hyads close their weeping eyes,  
And cold Arcturus fades in brighter air.  
Still on the temple's marble floor she lies ;  
And still she pours her unavailing prayer,  
' O guard my Ceyx o'er yon treacherous wave,  
O hear me, mighty Juno ! hear and save.

‘Great Ocean lies as in eternal sleep,  
But I have listened to his angry roar,  
And watched with awe the seething billows sweep,  
And thunder on the black Trachynian shore,  
And seen the broken planks bestrew the strand,  
And read their names upon the empty stone,  
That far away from friends and native land  
Unburied lie, or rock in floods unknown.  
Great is the Clarian God, and proud his fane,  
But long the way and terrible the main.

‘What though he calls on Lucifer his sire,  
Yet Horror lurks along the pathless way,  
And clouds and darkness hide the Star-god’s fire,  
And all the winds are greedy for their prey.  
My father keeps them in th’ Æolian cave,  
Pent round with rocks, and girt with many a chain.  
Of old I trembled when I heard them rave,  
And now, if they should break their bonds again !  
Eurus and Notus, well their might I know,  
And the broad wings of blustering Aquilo.

‘ Ere Luna thrice her narrowing horns should fill,  
The ships should come ; I watched with sleepless  
eyes,  
And lo ! to-night, on Cæta’s pine-clad hill,  
I saw the silver orb completed rise ;  
The wine is poured, the softest couch is spread,  
The baths prepared his weary limbs to lave,  
And love to smooth the pillow for his head,  
And yet he comes not ; Juno, guard and save  
My Ceyx tossed on yonder terrible sea!  
O mighty Juno ! bring my lord to me.’

Vain supplications ! unavailing tears !  
Th’ inexorable Gods are hard to move ;  
Stern Orcus weeps not, heeds not if he hears  
The bitterest sorrows and the truest love,  
And lo ! beneath the golden domes of dawn,  
Where the dumb waves in stately measure glide,  
With ghastly pomp a crownless king is borne,  
Stretched on the lingering chariot of the tide.  
A crownless, lifeless king the conqueror sea  
Gives back thy lord beloved, Alcyone.

· Thus art thou come ? and all my vows in vain,  
Thus pale and cold, O spouse ! beloved,' she cries ;  
' But pale and cold I kiss thy cheek again,  
And mine the couch where'er my Ceyx lies.'  
Too late relenting Juno heeds her woe,  
And Hades, half-reluctant, yields his right;  
Yet downward still th' eternal rivers flow,  
Nor Jove can all undo their grievous plight.  
Yet what they may, the Gods in pity give,  
Through life to mourn, yet mourning still to live.  
They live, but changed in form, twin birds they rove  
The wintry seas, their former state forgot,  
And so prolong their sorrows and their love,  
In such content as fits their meaner lot.  
Now Æolus subdues the vexing gale,  
While she securely tends her feathered brood ;  
Pleased at the sight the shipman hoists his sail,  
Fearless of harm, and knows the omen good,  
Nor heeds that ever tale so sad could be  
As this of Ceyx and Alcyone.

*THE CASTLE AND THE COTTAGE.*

IN the great Bohemian forest the giant Arber stands,  
And casts his dusky shadow far o'er the broad German  
lands ;

The roaming winds with wreaths of cloud his wrinkled  
forehead crown ;

A thousand streams through shrouds of mist from crag  
to crag leap down ;

They roar along his rocky slopes, until at last they  
meet,

Lost in the lake that, deep and broad, lies stretched  
before his feet ;

And there, far up the steep, of old a stately castle  
stood,

Men still may mark the crumbling stones, who pierce  
the frowning wood ;

But never hunter loves to roam those gloomy ruins  
near,  
In hottest chase he slacks his pace though hard upon  
the deer ;  
No woodman loves to lift the axe, though straight the  
pines and tall,  
Within the horror-haunted shade of that grim castle  
wall ;  
The boatman on the lake beneath more quickly plies  
the oar,  
With holy sign and muttered prayer to shun the  
dreaded shore.  
Proud was that stately castle once, the sunset's crimson  
glow  
Burned from its battlemented front for many a league  
below ;  
And broad and straight the terraced walks, and gay  
the garden bowers,  
Mingling their hues with rainbow gleams shed from  
the fleeting showers.

There nestling, at the mountain's feet, a fisher's cottage  
lay,

Where the calm waves crept round the point and  
curved the pebbly bay ;

And there, as closed the summer days, their hours of  
labour done,

Before the threshold oft would sit the fisher and his  
son—

A tender child, and yet with strength to share his  
father's toil,

Whose little life had calmly flowed unstained by sin or  
guile.

The father reckons up his gains as o'er their task they  
bend,

And spread the straining nets to dry, or broken row-  
lock mend ;

And when they end their work at last, and hills and  
lake grow dim,

There rises with the curling mists the fisher's evening  
hymn.



So summer went, but wilder sounds and sights the  
winter brought,  
For then the Baron with his train that ancient castle  
sought ;  
With hound and horse and groom and page a joyous  
troop they came,  
And many a lordly reveller, and many a merry  
dame.  
Day after day those comrades gay ranged the wide  
forest o'er,  
And loosed the couples at the stag, and speared the  
angry boar.  
At night around the board they met, a wild and reckless  
throng,  
While fled the hours with godless jests and many a  
ribald song ;  
No Sabbath morn arose to claim its meet observance  
there,  
No solemn bell with warning voice proclaimed the  
hour of prayer.

The chaplain in the Baron's train he was a scurvy  
priest,

And ever foremost in the brawl, and latest at the  
feast.

So when December's nights were rough, and all the  
lake rolled in

In hoary waves, the riot rose above the tempest's  
din.

The pious fisher heard in awe, and, closer to his  
breast,

He clasped the child, and longer prayed, though past  
the hour for rest.

For oft he deemed, o'er lake and hill as rung the  
devilish rout,

Strange voices mingled with the breeze, and yelled  
the chorus out ;

And demon shouts and laughter wild the tumult helped  
to swell,

Mingling with man's unholy mirth the revelry of  
Hell.

It was the sacred Christmas time, before the castle  
gate,  
His well-filled basket by his side the boy untroubled  
sate,  
Of trout and perch and carp and tench he brought a  
glittering store,  
And waited for his hard-won meed before the wicket  
door ;  
For such the pious sire's command, no foot to set  
within  
Those godless gates, lest he perchance partake the  
shame and sin.  
Forth came a serving-man in haste, and when the boy  
he spied,  
' Now quick unto the village speed and take this purse,'  
he cried ;  
' For many a lamp we have to fill, and many a taper  
bright  
Must burn to light the royal feast in yonder halls to-  
night.'

The boy he sped, the sun glowed red, the trees were  
rough with rime,

The ice shafts cracked beneath his feet, it was a merry  
time ;

The boy he sped, the village reached, his errand soon  
was done,

‘ Yet stay,’ the master said, for well he knew the  
fisher’s son,

‘ Now take, my boy, these tapers three,’ the master  
said and smiled,

‘ And burn them on this sacred night before the Holy  
Child.’

The sun has set, the streaks of gold have faded from  
the steep,

Along the rugged mountain’s side the twilight shadows  
creep,

More purple grows the sky above, more dim the lake  
below,

Where quivering on the rippling flood the lights re-  
flected glow.

For, in the lattice window placed, there burned the  
tapers three,

And son and sire together bowed with suppliant hand  
and knee ;

With welcome to the Child Divine the solemn hymn  
they pour,

And read with awe the sacred page as comes th' ex-  
pected hour.

That night the Fiend roamed o'er the earth, his soul  
was filled with spleen,

Where'er he turned some altar burned, some pious  
work was seen ;

Through the church windows bright he gazed, in  
anger and despair,

For every voice was tuned to praise, each hand was  
clasped in prayer.

Then flashed his eye with joy, I ween, and loud his  
laughter rung,

When, on that castle proud, his gaze the arch deceiver  
flung :

‘Cower as ye will, ye mumming slaves, O ! here’s a  
braver show,

How full they fill the goblets up, how bright the  
torches glow !

There’s not a lamp in yonder hall but sheds for me  
its blaze,

There’s not a song at yonder board but celebrates my  
praise.’

Meantime the huntsman Walter thought (a thirsty  
knave was he)

Beneath the castle vaults to pry and search what there  
might be ;

For he had heard that choicest wines were stored  
those caves within,

What better night than this to try the long-forbidden  
bin ?

Old Hugo, careless of his trust, in drunken slumber  
lay ;

’Twas easy to his side to creep and steal the keys  
away ;

Bright blazed the torch, he bores the cask, no purple  
juice doth pour,

A black thin powder slowly runs across the cellar  
floor.

No wine is here, those barrels grim a mightier power  
contain,

And purple shall the vintage be pressed from that  
gloomy grain.

Nor long the pause ! a crash more loud than thunder  
rends the sky,

The rocks are rent, the trees are bent, and tossed like  
stalks on high ;

The quiet lake, roused from its depths, as by an earth-  
quake's shock,

Leaps up ; the startled fisher's barks with sudden  
tempest rock ;

Tossed high in air, like fans of flame, the crackling  
fragments tower,

Then scattered far, o'er land and lake, falls back the  
fiery shower.

O Heaven! protect the cottage now ; and lo ! an angel  
stands,

His glittering spear he waves around with high uplifted  
hands ;

Far flash across the glooms of night the splendours of  
his wings,

As o'er that lowly fisher's roof their shining shield he  
flings ;

For his the heaven-appointed task to guard that pure  
abode,

The lowliest shrine can shelter find within the shade  
of God.

The storm has ceased ; the echoes die that rolled  
from hill to hill ;

The waters of the lake subside ; the woods lie green  
and still ;

All silent ! all ! as though no sound had marred the  
night's repose ;

Yet still, where burned those tapers three, the light re-  
flected shows,



And there unharmed, amid the wreck repose in slumber  
mild,

Their sleep with heavenly visions filled, the fisher and  
his child.

Where is that lofty castle now? Where are those  
revellers all

Who sate around the glittering feast in that gay ban-  
quet hall?

Ask of the forest and the lake, ask of the distant dell;  
'They saw and heard, they felt and knew, they keep  
their secret well.

A blackened, tottering ruin lies where rose those  
turrets proud,

Rimmed by the ghastly moon that sets through hollow  
rifts of cloud ;

While far beyond the snowy peaks tinged by the  
reddening dawn,

Like white-robed priests in holy awe await the Christ-  
mas morn.

*THE ORGAN BOYS.*

ONCE as I roamed in the sunshine gay,  
    Strange webs of nonsense knitting,  
I chanced to see, by the dusty way,  
    Two little Italians sitting.

Never, in all my life, had I  
    Beheld such anxious faces;  
I knew not whether to laugh or cry,  
    So sad were their grimaces.

Not like gentlemen, grave and wise,  
    Meeting in consultation,  
But legs, and arms, and lips, and eyes,  
    In wild gesticulation.

A trusty friend between them lies,  
Now deaf to every greeting,  
He only utters groans and sighs,  
In spite of their entreating.

Sudden and swift the blow it fell,  
Never a note of warning,  
But yesterday so blythe and well,  
So silent and sad this morning.

And many a bitter tear they'll shed,  
If he should ne'er recover,  
The friend that brings their daily bread,  
More true than wife or lover.

Heavily on the dusty road,  
They'll journey on to-morrow,  
Bearing the dumb and useless load,  
In poverty, want, and sorrow.

Tap his chest, and feel each bone,  
The pulse must be inspected,  
'Tis clear there is a want of tone,  
And the nerves may be affected.

Boldly at once to their work they go,  
Begin their examination ;  
Not like practitioners, I know,  
In doubt and hesitation.

They open his chest, to find his heart,  
His strange anatomy showing,  
Shut it again with a shake and a start,  
To set the pulses going.

And all at once he began to pour  
An oft-repeated ditty,  
He had sung it a thousand times and more,  
Through village and town and city.

And the little Italians grinned for joy,  
For he needed no physician ;  
It was no deadly malady,  
But a slight indisposition.

And my heart seemed lighter than before,  
When I heard the organ speaking,  
Though I'd given the boys, at my own house-door,  
A shilling to stop its squeaking.

*THE SWALLOWS.*

THE swallows, the busy swallows,  
See how they dip and glide,  
Under the grey old castle,  
Over the glistening tide.

Soaring and circling ever,  
In many a mazy ring,  
Betwixt the sky and the river,  
What do the swallows sing ?

They sing of Spring and of Summer,  
Of the golden days that are past ;  
They sing of the dying Autumn,  
And the Winter that comes so fast ;

Of all things fair that have vanished  
From grove, and garden, and dell ;  
Of the flowers that bloomed and perished ;  
Of the fruits that ripened and fell.

Of many a sweet voice silent,  
And bright hues faded away,  
Ere the twilight shades came closer,  
To darken the narrow day.

O ! earth was young and lovely  
In the days that are gone, they say ;  
There were garlands in all the thickets,  
A song upon every spray.

Alas ! for the beauty perished,  
The melodies hushed and gone ;  
The roses are dead, and the singers  
Are silent every one.

'Tis time ; we must not tarry,  
For here we cannot dwell ;  
The sky grows darker and darker ;  
Farewell, sad earth, farewell !

Beyond the shining ocean,  
O'er many a spacious plain,  
We know the distant valleys,  
Where our joys shall bloom again.

Alas ! for ye, weary workers,  
Tied to the dreary earth,  
Ye cannot journey with us,  
Ye may not share our mirth.

We hear the Winter moaning,  
Through the forest pines afar,  
That girdle his ice-clad mountain,  
Under the frosty star.



The verdure pales before him,  
As he crawls from hill to hill ;  
The freezing rivers tarry,  
Touched by his fingers chill.

And ye must wait and serve him,  
In darkness, and cold, and dearth ;  
Alas ! for ye, weary workers,  
Tied to the dreary earth.

But we will away to the southward ;  
We must not linger long ;  
He can fether the fleetest pinion,  
And hush the sweetest song.

*THE HARTLEY COLLIERY ACCIDENT,*  
1864.

No dungeon wall their flight forbade,  
No fetter held them bound,  
No tyrant's will a watch had made  
To hem their prison round.

But wealth and strength their aid have given,  
Those workers to release ;  
And prayers of anguish cry to heaven,  
To bid their bondage cease.

Alive! but tombed beneath the soil,  
Deep hidden from the day,  
Two hundred patient sons of toil,  
In that dark dwelling lay.

They hear the stir of life above,  
    Hope lingering with despair ;  
The feeble pulses slowly move,  
    In that empoisoned air.

The mattock's stroke, the long, long pause,  
    The work resumed once more ;  
Their sense, long skilled, divines the cause,  
    And counts the chances o'er.

And still their brothers laboured on,  
    But days on days went past,  
While foot by foot the way was won,  
    To lead them forth at last.

'Tis ended now ; but all too late  
    Man's succour comes ; for see  
An Angel's hand has touched the gate,  
    And set the prisoners free.

*OH! NEVER DEEM.*

OH ! never deem thy tears are shed  
At Pity's voice in vain ;  
They sink on sorrowing hearts, as sinks  
On earth the mellow rain.

For every genial shower that falls,  
New flowers to life are given ;  
For every tear, perchance, there blooms  
Some joy for thee in heaven.

*GOOD NIGHT!*

GOOD NIGHT ! the sun was hid to-day ;

But see, the gloom is breaking,

And every cloud will melt away,

Long, long before his waking.

The holly bush, 'neath Winter's snow,

Still wears his branches greenly ;

And Time hath chills for us, we know,

We'll bear them, love, serenely.

Our troubles follow us, and stray

In paths where we have led them ;

Dur tears we'll treasure, till the day

When we shall need to shed them.

And though to-night thy cheek is wet,  
We'll laugh to-morrow gladly  
And wonder why we ever met,  
To say Good Night! so sadly.

*PEACE.*

THE hens sate cackling on the bough,  
As proud as they could be ;  
Sir Reynard came and stood below,  
A courteous knave was he.

The tears were standing in his eyes,  
And some ran down his cheek,  
' My heart, it is so full,' he cries,  
' For joy I scarce can speak.'

' A peace, an universal peace,  
Has been proclaimed at last ;  
All angry passions now must cease,  
All treacherous wiles are past.

‘The Hawk and Wren walk arm in arm,  
The Mouse has kissed the Cat,  
The Wolf and Sheep have hired a farm,  
And the Dog dines with the Rat.

‘And I, to bring the glorious news,  
Have hurried from the wood ;  
Come down, dear friends, and don’t refuse  
To hail the tidings good.’

The Cock stretched out his neck and said,  
‘Hey! Cock-a-doodle-doo!  
’Tis strange how soon reports are spread,  
I hope the news is true.

‘What means that scarlet on the lea?  
What mean those merry sounds  
O! ’tis a jovial sight to see,  
The huntsmen and the hounds!’



‘What’s that you say? I must away,’

Replied that artful fox;

‘Oh! do not go; ’tis peace you know,’

Sung out the hens and cocks.

‘Nay!’ Reynard cried, and licked his chaps,

‘My flight abrupt excuse,

I’ll call another day; perhaps

They have not heard the news.’

*THE WIND AND THE SQUIRREL.*

‘ Ho ! Mr. Wind, how cold you blow,

    I must stop up the doorway down below,  
And make another one overhead.’

    ‘ I shall blow through that too,’ the Wind he said.  
‘ Very well ! ’ said the Squirrel, ‘ we’ll close it so,  
    And now you must blow outside, you know.’

The Wind he made a sulky face,

    But the Squirrel sate in a snug warm place.  
The Wind he came, and shook the tree,

    But the Squirrel could neither hear nor see ;  
He let him storm, for the doors were shut,  
    And he cocked his ear, and he cracked a nut.

*WAITING.*

RETURN, beloved, for I fade and fade,  
Like yonder lonely star that fades and dies,  
Though gladness flushes all the Eastern skies,  
He melts in light, but I in deepest shade.

And heavily I draw this painful breath,  
And wait and wait expecting still thy smile  
That never comes ; but yet a little while,  
Ah ! who shall first embrace me, thou or death ?

When weary watchers sink at last to sleep,  
And sit with folded palms beside my bed,  
In dreams beyond the hills and seas I tread,  
That far from thee my days imprisoned keep.

I wander on through all the tented line,  
The still white ghastly rows are drear to see ;  
I search through all the hosts where thou shouldst be,  
And many plumes are waving, but not thine.

Now slowly through the guarded gates I pass,  
No watchful sentry's challenge bids me stay ;  
Adown the gloomy vale I take my way,  
'Mid hillocks low that shade the frosty grass.

For many slumber here aloof from strife,  
The dumb earth makes no mention, and the wind  
Mourns equally for all ; I cannot find  
Thy place, beloved, nor in death nor life.

I wake and weep, but all my pain is past ;  
Still is the aching brow, the throbbing heart ;  
I must arise, 'tis time that I depart,  
O love, long sought, long lost, but found at last !

*'TIS LONG TO MAY.*

THE iron roads are hard and white,  
The sky is ashen gray,  
The sun is up, yet scarce can light  
The dull December day ;  
The world is but a dreary sight ;  
And oh ! 'tis long to May.

No rushes ripple on the stream,  
Where late we loved to float ;  
No silver water-lilies gleam  
Above the stagnant moat ;  
Yon fishermen like spectres seem,  
That guard a phantom boat.

The ragged nests are hanging high  
    Upon the leafless bough,  
Once shut so close from earth and sky  
    Their secrets none might know ;  
Now, like men's deeds, revealed they lie  
    To all the winds that blow.

There lay the eggs, grey, green, and white  
    There perched the singers gay,  
But now the house is empty quite,  
    The tenants flown away.  
An empty nest's a dreary sight,  
    And oh ! 'tis long to May.

*A HUNTING SONG.*

I KNOW no better pastime,  
When winter clouds the year,  
Than o'er the vale or moorland  
To hunt the fox or deer.

I ne'er did love the city,  
For all its pleasures gay ;  
To me a wet November  
Is dearer than the May.

For oh ! what joy delightful,  
By spinny copse or gorse,  
To meet each merry sportsman,  
And mark each gallant horse.

To scan the speckled beauties  
    We've scanned so oft before,  
For, every time we see them,  
    We love them more and more.

And then, when first they find him,  
    What joy it is to know,  
If you will only let him,  
    Your horse can jump and go.

Though the lands are deep and holding,  
    And you ride good fourteen stun',  
If you'll only treat him fairly,  
    You're sure to see the fun.

When the hounds begin to settle,  
    And the crowd can do no harm,  
The jumps are stiff and plenty,  
    But your blood begins to warm :



And if you come to water,  
A ducking may betide,  
But all you've got to think of  
Is to land the other side.

And when the pack are puzzled,  
For all their noses fine,  
I love to see them steady,  
And plodding on the line.

When they begin to race him  
Across the grass, why ! then,  
I'll try to keep my place, sirs,  
Among the foremost men.

When I get old and shaky,  
And my nerve begins to fail,  
Then I shall be content, sirs,  
To ride among the tail.

When I can ride no longer,  
Why then at home I'll stay ;  
But now I'll go a hunting,  
Upon a hunting day.

*THE DANCING BEAR.*

A DANCING bear once broke his chain,  
And hurried to the woods again,  
There on his hinder legs he stood  
Before the shaggy brotherhood ;  
And as, with love of art he warmed,  
A wondrous masterpiece performed.  
'Behold !' he cried with exultation,  
'These are the fruits of education.  
Attempt that "pas" now, he who dare.'  
'Peace, fool,' growled out an aged bear,  
'This art of thine, it doth proclaim  
Only thy slavery and thy shame.'

*THE WALK ON THE MOOR.*

I ROAMED on the barren moorland,  
The wind went wailing by,  
And the clouds, like a troop of mourners,  
Paced darkly down the sky ;

And the rain from the murky distance,  
Like one in tears and haste,  
Bringing some grievous tidings,  
Came rushing over the waste.

The lark lay low in the stubble,  
The bittern screamed on the marsh,  
The black cold river hurried  
With a murmur wild and harsh.

And ever amid the pauses  
Of the winds, as they rose and fell,  
I heard from the distant village  
The toll of the funeral bell.

For whom is that hireling mourner  
Singing the dirge to-day?  
The heart and tongue of iron  
That mourn for a shape of clay.

Doth the tender maid to the altar  
With her icy bridegroom go?  
Doth the weary grandsire pillow  
On earth his locks of snow?

Perchance some tender blossom,  
That perished ere its spring,  
For Heaven at last to ripen,  
With trust and tears they bring.

O nigh forgotten voices !

My eyes are dimmed again

With the shade of a long-lost sorrow,

And the dream of a distant pain.

And far o'er the barren moorland,

I roam 'neath the fading light,

And the clouds and the grey horizon

Are purpling into night.

And the rain comes beating o'er me,

And the winds they fall and swell ;

But I hear, amid the pauses,

The toll of the distant bell.

*SLEEP !*

SLEEP ! the last words are spoken, Dust to dust !

Ashes to ashes ! Sleep !

No sculptured tomb shall rise, nor graven bust,

To tell th' unheeding world for whom we weep ;

But on thy sacred turf the tears shall fall,

And thy sweet memory live, urned in the hearts of all.

Alas ! that memory now remains alone,

No time can e'er what we have lost restore,

In vain the stifled sob, the secret moan ;

Oh ! never more

Shall that dear voice be heard whose accents blessed

The happy hearth in sunny days of yore ;

Thou hast thy rest.

They say, 'tis sin to mourn ;  
But hearts will ache, and tears will flow, when they  
Who made the path of life a pleasant way

Have reached the bourne ;  
They bathe their limbs in heavenly streams, but we  
Must journey ever onward wearily ;  
As yet our grief is young !

So young, alas !  
Yet all things do remind us of despair,  
And Nature's self doth find a silent tongue  
To bid us mourn anew. The tender grass,  
Unscorched by Summer's heat, doth greenly bear  
The impress of thy feet where thou didst pass ;  
And still the breeze,

That waved but late the tresses of thy hair  
Amid the silence of the leafless trees,

Doth wander long,  
And makes lament for thee the solemn groves among.  
So Sorrow thinks they grieve who never know  
A pang of grief.



Behold ! the tender flowers,  
O'er whom, when Spring was young, we saw thee bow  
To guard from biting frost and crushing showers,  
Are faded now ;  
Each tender stalk is bent, withered each leaf.  
They, in the desolation of thy bowers,  
Earthward do lean their head,  
They should have decked thee living, therefore now  
They mourn thee dead.  
Some on thy breast we cast, some on thy brow  
So white and cold ;  
Awhile they bloomed, then withered as didst thou ;  
Dim grew their eyes of gold,  
And their faint odours on the sorrowful air  
Expired, for Death was there.  
But we could sit and gaze with tearless eyes,  
And watch beside our treasure, though we knew  
That <sup>e</sup>grave would come so soon to claim his prize,  
And so we dwelt with sorrow till we grew  
Contented with despair ; then came the last

Dark hours of watch and wail, then sad and slow,  
Through the wet paths we saw the mourners go.

Now all is past,

Woe ! bitter woe !

The last sad words are spoken,  
The silver cord is loosed, the golden bowl is broken.

*THE MINSTREL.*

GOETHE.

‘WHAT strains are these that ring so clear,

O'er drawbridge and o'er wall ?

The song, that at our gates we hear,

Shall sound within our hall.’

The monarch spake, the pages ran,

The portal oped, the aged man

Unto the king they call.

‘I greet ye ! knights renowned afar ;

I greet ye ! lovely dames ;

O heaven of beauty ! star by star !

What tongue shall tell your names ?

These halls, what royal splendours light !

Close, close, mine eyes, your wondering sight,

Th' unwonted glory shames.’

He closed his eyes, he swept the wires,  
The flood melodious rolled ;  
Each warrior burned with fiercer fires,  
No fair one's heart was cold.  
The king, enraptured, praised the bard,  
And o'er his neck, the song's reward,  
He flung a chain of gold.

‘ The golden chain I may not wear,  
It best beseems the knight,  
Against whose shield the foeman's spear,  
Has shivered in the fight.  
Or let thy chancellor, who bears  
The burthen of thy kingdom's cares,  
This burthen bear to-night.

‘ I sing, as sing the birds, among  
The forest boughs that dwell ;  
And, while the numbers flow, the song  
Repay the singer well.  
But if some guerdon may be mine,  
A golden goblet filled with wine,  
Shall best your favour tell.’

They filled the cup, the cup was brought ;

‘ O juice of joy divine !

Thrice blest the house that holds it nought

To pay the song with wine.

In hours like these, remember me,

With thanks to God, like mine to ye,

From hearts as warm as mine.’

*THE BLIND KING.*

UHLAND.

WHY throng the northern chiefs to-day  
On yonder craggy steep?  
What doth the monarch, blind and grey,  
Beside the roaring deep?

He cries aloud in bitter pain,  
Propped on his staff the while;  
The hollow echoes ring again  
From yonder rocky isle.

‘Thou robber! from thy cruel thrall,  
Give back my child, my own;  
Her harp, her song, so sweet were all,  
The joy mine age hath known.

‘She danced upon the level sand,  
The fairest ’mid the fair,  
O deed of shame ! O ruthless hand  
That snatched my jewel rare !’

Then strode the robber, fierce and wild,  
Forth from his rocky lair ;  
He smote upon the giant shield,  
And swung the sword in air.

‘Ho ! thou hast many a warrior there !  
Why suffer they this wrong ?  
Is none will fight for one so fair,  
Of all that valiant throng ?’

Dumb stood the knights ; nor voice nor sound,  
And risk the strife will none ;  
The blind old king turned sadly round,  
‘And stand I then alone ?’

Then came his youngest son, with fire  
He grasped his father's hand :  
' My arm is strong ; let me, my sire,  
This robber base withstand.'

' O son ! gigantic is the foe ;  
None ere withstood his might ;  
Yet, 'tis a hero's hand, I know,  
That grasps my own so tight.

' Take then the sword, the true, the tried,  
Renowned in many a lay ;  
If thou dost fall, yon rolling tide  
Shall be my grave to-day.'

But hark ! the splash of keel and oar,  
A boat is on the main ;  
The king stood listening on the shore,  
Till all was hushed again.



Till o'er the sea there thundered out,  
The clash of shield and sword ;  
The tumult and the battle-shout  
Were echoed all abroad.

Then cried the king, 'twixt joy and fear,  
' How doth the battle go ?  
My sword, its ringing chime I hear,  
Its merry voice I know.'

' The robber lies beside the wave,  
His guilt its meed hath won ;  
Hail to the bravest of the brave !  
Hail to thy warrior son !'

And all was calm, and hushed again,  
He listened from the shore ;  
' What sounds are those upon the main,  
The plash of keel and oar ?'

‘ We see them come, the royal pair,  
Thy son with sword and shield ;  
And her, the maid with golden hair,  
Thy daughter fair, Gunild.’

‘ Now welcome ! ’ cried the blind old king,  
‘ Thrice welcome to the brave !  
Around my age new joys shall spring,  
And honour guard my grave.

‘ My son shall place upon my breast  
The sword that rung so clear ;  
And she shall sing me to my rest,  
Gunild, my daughter dear.’

*THE WALK BY MIDNIGHT*

HERVEGH.

I WANDERED, with the spirit of the Night,  
The broad and silent city to and fro ;  
All hushed ! and yet what anguish, what delight,  
Were waking here a little hour ago.

Mirth, like a flower, is withered and is gone ;  
The wildest goblets now forget to gleam ;  
E'en Sorrow parted with the parting sun ;  
The world is worn and weary, let it dream.

How every angry feeling melts and dies,  
While rising through the storms that dimmed the  
day ;

The Moon with soothing radiance fills the skies,  
E'en the dead rose leaves bloom where falls her ray.

Light as a sound, and silent as a star,

My soul goes forth beneath those solemn beams;  
Through all her world of fancy wanders far,  
'Mid human hearts, and mingles with their dreams.

My shadow, like a spy, doth near me stand ;

And now I pause before the prison gates,  
Where thy too faithful son, my fatherland,

His love for thee and Freedom expiates.  
He sleeps, nor recks of man's injustice now ;  
He wanders 'mid his forest oaks, that seem  
To wreath triumphal garlands for his brow ;  
' O thou, the god of Freedom ! let him dream.'

A cottage near a stream, a humble home,

A bed where innocence and want repose,  
Yet dreams of heaven unto the peasant come,  
With blest oblivion from life's daily throes.

With every grain the God of Slumber sows,  
More gorgeous grows the golden harvest's gleam ;  
His hut expanding to a palace grows ;  
' God of the poor man ! let the peasant dream.'

By the last house, upon the bench of stone  
I rest awhile, and breathe a blessing there ;  
I love thee well, dear maid, but not alone,  
For thou with Freedom must my longing share ;  
Twin doves, with silver wings, before thee shine ;  
I only see the charging squadrons stream ;  
Thy dreams are butterflies, but eagles mine ;  
'God of all love, O let my darling dream !'

'Thou Star ! like Fortune, struggling from the cloud,  
Thou Night ! enthroned in purple depths of space,  
Let me yet not behold the waking crowd,  
And read the anguish in each stricken face.  
The Sun must rise to look again on tears,  
While Freedom flies before his earliest beam ;  
And Tyranny once more the falchion rears,  
'O God of pity ! leave us all to dream.'

*THE KING AND THE SHEPHERDESS.*

UHLAND.

## I.

HERE in the happy Maytime,  
Here on the grassy plain,  
Under the golden sunlight,  
How shall I pour my strain

The azure streams are gliding,  
The golden clouds they sail,  
The knights in their pride are riding  
Adown the flowery vale.

The forest boughs are waving,  
The paths with wild-flowers glow,  
The shepherdesses wander  
In the valley to and fro.

Lord Goldmar rode right proudly,  
His knightly host before ;  
He wore a crimson mantle,  
And a crown of gold he bore.

Then from his charger lightly  
To earth the monarch leapt,  
And he tied the rein to the linden,  
The warriors onward swept.

A fountain cool was bubbling  
Beneath the thicket's shade ;  
The birds they sang so sweetly,  
The flowers a carpet made.

Why sang the birds so sweetly ?  
Why were the flowers so rare ?  
A Shepherdess sate by the fountain,  
The fairest of the fair.

Lord Goldmar brake through the thicket,  
 That rustled as he sped ;  
 The lambs in sudden terror  
 Unto the Shepherdess fled.

‘ Now welcome, and thrice welcome,  
 Thou maiden, wondrous fair !  
 That I should e’er affright thee,  
 A bitter grief it were.’

‘ Nay ! but I am not frightened,  
 As I may swear to thee ;  
 I thought that a bird had fluttered  
 Out of the linden tree.’

‘ Ah ! might I drink of the pitcher  
 That by thy side I see ;  
 The gift in my heart I’d cherish  
 As a tender boon from thee.’



‘ Now thou shalt drink from the pitcher,  
I hold it a little thing,  
I would draw from the well for any,  
E’en though there came a king.’

She stooped, and drew from the fountain,  
And she bids him drink at last ;  
Tenderly looks he on her,  
Yet holds she the pitcher fast.

And he cries with passion melting,  
‘ Thou queen of the forest bowers,  
Well might I deem thee sister  
To the other beauteous flowers.

‘ Yet is thy speech so gracious,  
So royal is thy mien,  
Rather I deem thee nurtured  
On the bosom of a queen !’

‘ Ask of my father the shepherd,  
    If crown he e’er put on ?  
And the shepherdess, my mother,  
    When sate she on the throne?’

But he laid his silken mantle,  
    Upon her neck so fair ;  
The crown of gold he placed it  
    Over her nut-brown hair.

The Shepherdess, she looked proudly, ‘  
    And cried with a merry call,  
‘ Bend to me, trees and flow’rets ;  
    Bow to me, lambkins all.’

And she gave him again the mantle,  
    And light her laughter rung ;  
But the golden crown, Lord Goldmar  
    Into the fountain flung.

‘ This gift shall be a token,  
    My crown a pledge I yield,  
Till I shall come to claim it,  
    From many a foughten field.

‘ A king in the gloomy dungeon,  
    For twice eight years hath lain ;  
The hand of the foe is heavy  
    On city and on plain.

‘ His kingdom to deliver,  
    I haste with my knightly train ;  
To break his chains and bid him,  
    Look on the spring again.

‘ I go to my first of battles,  
    Under the burning sun,  
Wilt thou give me a draught from the fountain  
    After the fight be done ?’

112    *The King and the Shepherdess.*

‘ Yea ! I will draw from the fountain,  
    So long as draw I may ;  
And the crown again thou shalt have it,  
    As stainless as to-day.’

My first song I have sung it,  
    My second anon I’ll sing ;  
A bird hath spread his pinion,  
    Where will he fold his wing ?

II.

I SHOULD be singing and rhyming  
Of the drum and the trumpet loud ;  
But I hear the lute's sweet chiming,  
And the lark's voice in the cloud.

I should be rhyming and telling  
Of wars and of deeds of death ;  
But I see the young buds swelling,  
And I drink the wild-flowers' breath.

My tale 'tis of Goldmar only ;  
Ye had not deemed, perchance,  
A knight so soft in parley  
Could aim so stout a lance.

He stormed the robber's castle,  
     His banner crowned the steep,  
 Then came the agèd monarch  
     Forth from the dungeon keep.

‘Thou sun and ye lordly mountains,  
     Ye field and ye forests, say,  
 Why are ye young and lovely,  
     While I am old and grey?’

With pomp and mirth and music  
     Began the royal feast ;  
 But how shall I tell ye of it,  
     Who sate not there a guest.

And e'en though I had feasted  
     Among those courtiers fine,  
 Perchance I had heeded little,  
     Except the noble wine.

*The King and the Shepherdess.* 115

And now unto Lord Goldmar,  
The royal sire, he cries,  
'To-day I hold a tourney,  
And thou shalt name the prize.'

'Sir King, now give, I pray thee,  
To the victor in the fight,  
Nor golden spurs, nor helmet,  
But a crook and a lamb snow-white.'

So the prize for which lowly Shepherds  
Race o'er the daisied field,  
Is a meed for warriors meeting  
With lance and helm and shield.

Before the spear of Goldmar,  
Unhorsed fell every knight,  
And the trumpets clanged as they bare him  
The crook and the lamb snow-white.

116     *The King and the Shepherdess.*

And again to all the people,  
The aged monarch cries,  
‘ I’ll hold another tourney,  
And for a nobler prize.

‘ I’ll give no empty bauble,  
No trifle vain as sand;  
My crown shall be the guerdon,  
And a royal maiden’s hand.’

How burned those eager warriors  
At the trumpet’s ringing call;  
Each knight he bore him bravely,  
But Goldmar vanquished all.

Then stood the King encircled  
By lords and ladies rare;  
And he bade them call Lord Goldmar,  
Of knights the flower and star.



Then came the victor proudly,  
    The crook was in his hand,  
The snow-white lamb beside him,  
    Led with a crimson band.

Then cried the King, 'I give thee,  
    No trifle light as sand;  
My crown I give and kingdom,  
    From a royal maiden's hand.'

'No queen that lives to win me,  
    Nor diadem may avail;  
My heart is constant ever,  
    To the Shepherdess in the vale.

'Unto her feet I carry  
    This crook and lamb snow-white;  
Heaven guard ye, lords and ladies,  
    I seek the vale to-night.'

118 *The King and the Shepherdess.*

And then a sweet voice answered,  
And it seemed to him as though  
The birds around were singing,  
And he saw the wild-flowers blow.

And when his eyes he lifted,  
He saw the Shepherdess stand,  
A royal robe around her,  
A golden crown in her hand.

‘Now welcome, thou knight ungentle  
In my father’s halls well met ;  
Say, and must thou be going  
Unto the valley yet ?

‘First take the crown thou gavest,  
Thy pledge I yield again ;  
Twofold I thus restore it,  
Two kingdoms own thy reign.’

Not long apart they tarried,  
What farther there befell,  
When the knight stood by the maiden,  
Would ye that I should tell?

Now if a maid should ask me,  
My story soon were said,  
Might I clasp her waist and kiss her  
On her lips so rosy red.

*THE RANGER'S DAUGHTER.*

E. GEIBEL.

IT stands in the forest, the forest deep,  
The ranger's cottage lone,  
The icicles hang from the frozen roof,  
And there's snow on the threshold stone.

The maiden sits by the hearth and spins  
A veil for the bridal morn ;  
She hears in the chimney the whistling wind,  
As the sparks are upward borne.

The hag of the forest came hobbling in ;  
No good her visits bring ;  
' Good evening, my dainty daughter, fine,  
A merry song I'll sing.'

‘ I have no mind your song to hear,  
My love he soon will come ;  
There’s bread to eat, and ale to drink,  
Take them, and get thee home.’

The hag she spoke, ‘ We’ve time, good truth,  
He cometh not to-day,  
The wood is deep, the road is long,  
He’ll take another way.’

‘ Why fright me thus with idle tales ?  
My love will come, I know ;  
He swore to love me, till the rose  
Was blooming through the snow.’

The maiden spoke with a heavy heart,  
The wind piped higher and higher ;  
The hag she sate, the hag she crooned  
Her dull song to the fire.

‘ And as I went adown the vale,  
Three wolves leapt out of the wood ;  
They howled for lucky sport, I wot ;  
Their tongues, they dripped with blood.

‘ And when unto the firs I came,  
I heard three ravens cry,  
They cried, “ To-night the ravens young,  
Shall banquet merrily.”

‘ And when I came to the frozen lake,  
A dainty youth I found ;  
His blood streamed out on the frozen snow,  
From many a gaping wound.

‘ The red rose blossoms in the snow,  
My tale now take it home ;  
The wood is deep, the way is long,  
Thy love will never come.’

The song was sung, the hag was gone,  
The hearth was black as night ;  
The maiden sate, and spake no word,  
Her cheeks were deadly white.

And louder ever piped the wind,  
And screamed the ravens wild ;  
Three days went past, and in the grave  
The ranger laid his child.

*THE MINSTREL'S RETURN.*

UHLAND.

THE Minstrel lies upon the bier ;  
From those pale lips no numbers flow ;  
The yellow laurel's garland sere  
Entwines his temples, pulseless now,

In dainty scrolls, upon his breast,  
They lay the songs, the last he sung ;  
And closely to his arm is pressed  
The lyre that once so sweetly rung.

So sleeps he on, a dreamless sleep ;  
Still thrills in every ear his lay ;  
But they that praise, can only weep  
The glorious Singer passed away.



And months and years have slowly fled,  
The cypress o'er his grave hath grown  
And they who mourned the Minstrel dead,  
Have each his own sepulchral stone.

But as the Spring, with strength renewed,  
And beauty fresh, returns to earth ;  
E'en so, with youth and grace endued,  
The Singer comes from darkness forth.

Unto the living newly wed,  
No traces of the tombs remain ;  
The very past, that mourned him dead,  
Lives in his verse, and breathes again.

*THE KING ON THE TOWER.*

UHLAND.

I SEE them lying in slumber soft,  
 Grey hills and misty vales below ;  
 Peace rests upon them, the breezes waft  
 To my ear no sound of woe.

For all I have thought, for all I have striven,  
 In sadness I drank of the sparkling bowl ;  
 The night is come, there is calm in Heaven ;  
 Now take thy rest, my soul.

Mine eyes are dim, my hair is grey,    ?  
 My weapons hang in the bannered hall ;  
 I have served thee, Justice, by night and day,  
 When shall I rest for all ?

Thou golden page, on the starry dome,  
Thy lore to me hath been ever dear ;  
Ye wondrous chimes, from afar that come,  
How sweetly ye fall on my ear.

Oh ! sacred peace, my heart's desire ;  
Oh ! holy night, thou dost tarry long ;  
When the stars shall shine with a purer fire,  
And the spheres have a fuller song !

*THE ANCESTRAL TOMBS.*

UHLAND.

HE went, arrayed in armour,  
 An old and feeble sire,  
 Unto the ancient chapel,  
 And he stood in the gloomy choir.

The coffins of his fathers  
 Were ranged the walls along ;  
 And there rose from the hollow caverns  
 A wild and solemn sound. *Song* .

‘ Yea ! I have heard your voices,  
 Ye souls of deathless fame,  
 I come to join your numbers,  
 Unstained by deed of shame.’

There lies an empty coffin,  
And there shall be his bed ;  
He lays him down, and pillows  
Upon the shield his head.

Upon his sword he foldeth  
His arms, and sinks to sleep ;  
Hushed are the Spirit Voices,  
And break not his slumber deep.

*THE LOST CHURCH.*

UHLAND.

OF on the forest's distant bound,  
There clangs in air a solemn bell,  
Yet no man knows whence comes the sound,  
Tradition scarce the spot can tell.  
From some forgotten church, they say,  
Those echoes float upon the wind.  
Once bands of pilgrims thronged the way,  
Now lives there none the path can find.

Once in the forest depths I strayed,  
'Mid wilds where man had seldom trod;  
And from the ills the world had made,  
I turned my longing thoughts to God

Then through the silence, lone and still,  
I heard those wondrous sounds again ;  
They seemed my every pulse to thrill,  
As nearer, fuller, swelled the strain.

My soul, in new and wondrous change,  
Was wafted on those tones divine,  
Yet knew not what enchantment strange,  
Could make such heavenly transports mine :  
I thought a hundred years and more  
In dreamlike trance had passed away,  
When through the mists that floated o'er,  
A wide expanse before me lay.

A deeper purple filled the air,  
The sun appeared more broad and bright,  
And I beheld a minster fair,  
Wrapped in a veil of golden light.  
On lucid clouds, like shining wings,  
Upborne it seemed to soar on high ;  
The arrowy spire, through curling rings  
Of glory, vanished in the sky.

The clashing bells, with joyous time,  
    High in the trembling turret swung ;  
No mortal hands awoke their chime,  
    By heavenly hosts the peal was rung.  
It seemed the self-same power was lent,  
    To wake my bosom's answering beat ;  
And so unto the dome I went,  
    With fearful joy and trembling feet,

What glorious visions blessed my sight,  
    My faltering speech can never paint ;  
The windows shone in sombre light,  
    With forms of many a martyred saint.  
The pictured shapes, with life endowed,  
    And haloed with celestial rays,  
With holy maids, Christ's champions proud,  
    In troops triumphant met my gaze.

I kneeled before the shrine ; with love  
    And tears of joy, my eyes were dimmed ;  
Upon the canopy above,  
    The glories of the heavens were limned,



My heart with eager longing sighed :  
And lo ! the dome was rent in twain :  
The gates of God were opened wide,  
Nor veil nor curtain did remain.

What scenes that glorious vision then  
Did to my raptured gaze unfold !  
What harmonies, unheard by men,  
More grand than trump, or organ rolled !  
Nor eye hath seen, nor tongue can tell ;  
Yet who such holy longing feels,  
Let him go listen to the bell  
That through the lonely forest peals.











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